

REMARKS

This Response is being filed within three months of the Office Action outstanding, dated December 9, 2004. No new claims have been added. Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 10, 15 and 20 are in independent form. No claims have been amended or added. Accordingly, no additional fees are required.

In the Office Action dated December 9, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-7, 10-12, 15 and 17-20 under 35 USC 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Taylor et al. (US 5,617,124, hereinafter "Taylor"). Each independent claim 1, 10, 15 and 20, will be addressed in turn.

With respect to claim 1, the Examiner states that Taylor teaches: "a printhead with a substantially linear nozzle array oriented in a first direction (figure 1, reference 34)" and "a roller mounted on the frame for rotation about an axis oriented in the first direction to receive ink spit from the printhead (figure 1, reference 50; figure 2, reference 70)." Applicants respectfully disagree.

Taylor, in figures 1 and 3, shows a top view of printheads 34 and 36 and a spittoon roller 70 mounted on an axis 55. The bottom surface of the printhead 34 and 36,

which might include any nozzle orifices, is not shown in this figure or any other figure of Taylor. In column 3, lines 57-59, Taylor states: "The printheads 34, 36 typically include a plurality of resistors (not shown) which are associated with the nozzles." The resistors and the nozzles of Taylor are not described in Taylor except for this single sentence. Accordingly, Taylor does teach or suggest a linear nozzle array. Moreover, Taylor does not teach or suggest a linear nozzle array oriented in a particular direction. Taylor, therefore, cannot teach a linear nozzle array oriented in the same direction as a roller axis because Taylor does not teach any particular orientation of the nozzles at all.

Applicants' claim 1 recites: "a substantially linear nozzle array oriented in a first direction" and "a roller mounted to the frame for rotation about an axis oriented in said first direction to receive ink spit from said printhead." In figure 3, Applicants show a set of four substantially linear nozzle arrays 82-88 oriented along an axis 89 (Applicants' specification, page 3, lines 28-30, "The illustrated printheads 71-78 may each have their nozzle arrays aligned along an axis 89 parallel to scanning axis 38). Axis 89 is positioned parallel to axes 51a-54a of rollers 51-54 (see figure 1) (Applicants' specification,

page 3, lines 6-8, "Rollers 51, 52, 53 and 54 may each be mounted on frame 42 for rotation about an axis 51a, 52a, 53a, and 54a, respectively, wherein axes 51a-54a may be positioned parallel to scanning axis 38.").

Taylor cannot teach a "substantially linear nozzle array" oriented in a same "first direction" as a roller axis because Taylor does not show any nozzles at all, and therefore cannot teach or suggest their orientation. Moreover, Taylor appears to teach away from a linear nozzle array oriented in the same direction as a roller axis because, as shown in figure 1, printheads 34 and 36 appear to have an elongate axis extending perpendicular to guide rod 40 and roller axis of rotation 55 (see figure 3). If the printheads of Taylor do include a linear nozzle array, the nozzle array would likely be oriented perpendicular to the roller axis 55, not in the same direction.

Accordingly, Applicants request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 1 and corresponding dependent claims 3-7, under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), and to allow these claims.

With respect to claim 10, Taylor teaches a single spittoon roller 70. Taylor does not teach multiple spittoon rollers.

In contrast, Applicants' claim 10 recites: "A method

of purging waste ink from a printhead of a printing mechanism having printheads for dispensing ink, comprising: positioning at least some of said printheads over rollers; and purging waste ink from said printheads onto the said rollers." (emphasis added). Taylor does not teach or suggest multiple rollers as recited in Applicants' claim 10. Accordingly, Applicants request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 10 and corresponding dependent claims 11-12, under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), and to allow these claims.

With respect to claim 15, similar to the discussion above regarding claim 1, Taylor does not show a linear nozzle array, or an orientation of a linear nozzle array in the same direction as a roller axis.

In contrast, Applicants' claim 15 recites: "A spittoon system for a printing mechanism having a printhead with a substantially linear nozzle array oriented in a first direction, comprising: means for receiving ink spit from said printhead; and means for rotating said means for receiving ink about an axis oriented in said first direction." (emphasis added).

Taylor does not teach or suggest a substantially linear nozzle array oriented in the same orientation as an axis of a means for rotating a means for receiving ink spit

from the printhead, as recited in Applicants' claim 15. Accordingly, Applicants request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 15 and corresponding dependent claims 17-19, under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), and to allow these claims.

With respect to claim 20, similar to the discussion above regarding claim 1, Taylor does not show a linear nozzle array, or its orientation in the same direction as a roller axis.

In contrast, Applicants' claim 20 recites: "a printhead having a substantially linear nozzle array oriented in a first direction" and "a roller mounted to the frame for rotation about an axis oriented in said first direction."

Taylor does not teach or suggest a substantially linear nozzle array oriented in the same orientation as an axis of a roller, as recited in Applicants' claim 20. Accordingly, Applicants request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), and to allow this claim.

In the Office Action dated December 9, 2004, the Examiner rejected dependent claims 13 and 14 under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Taylor et al. (US 5,617,124) in view of Leemhuis (US 6,733,106,

hereinafter "Leemhuis"). Each of claims 13 and 14 are dependent on independent claim 10. As discussed above, independent claim 10 recites: "A method of purging waste ink from a printhead of a printing mechanism having printheads for dispensing ink, comprising: positioning at least some of said printheads over rollers; and purging waste ink from said printheads onto the said rollers."
(emphasis added). As discussed above with respect to claim 10, Taylor does not teach or suggest multiple rollers as recited in Applicants' claim 10. Additionally, Leemhuis does not teach or suggest multiple rollers. Instead, Leemhuis teaches a single cylinder 60 (see figure 3). Accordingly, Applicants request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of dependent claims 13 and 14 and to allow these claims.

Conclusion

All pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner should have any questions regarding this response, a call to Applicant's counsel, Ms. Ingrid M. McTaggart at (503) 230-7934, is respectfully requested. If the Examiner should have any other questions regarding the above referenced application, a call to Applicant's counsel Mr. Bob Wasson at (360) 212-2338, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent via first class mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 3rd day of March, 2005.

Ingrid M. McTaggart